

THE ARKHAM COLLECTOR



Number Five :: Summer, 1969 :: .50c the copy

AN ARKHAM WAREHOUSE. In 1968 Arkham House sold 16,412 books — not alone those with the imprints of Arkham House or Mycroft & Moran, but including all books by August Derleth stocked by the House. At the same time Arkham House took in 24,000 books, so crowding our limited storage facilities that we were forced to alter our announced publishing schedule. We have finally had to meet the problem head on, and have had to make the decision to build a warehouse this year — and at today's inflated prices, that means a severe drain on our working capital. And that, in turn, means a still further alteration of our projected publishing program for the next few years. An increase in sales will be helpful, but at the present rate of sales, we will probably not be able to resume a full publishing schedule for several years to come.

The 1969 list of coming books, as announced, will be adhered to. One alteration that has been made in the announced list is the addition to *TALES OF THE CTHULHU MYTHOS*, coming in August, of a long novelette, *The Return of the Lloigor*, by Colin Wilson, and the necessary increase in price to \$7.50 the copy from the announced \$6.50. For 1970, then, we hope to publish at least two omnibus volumes —

OTHER DIMENSIONS, by Clark Ashton Smith,
6.50.

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SELECTED LETTERS III, by H. P. Lovecraft,
\$7.50.

As soon as possible, in 1970 or after, we will publish these books:

THE RIM OF THE UNKNOWN, by Frank
Belknap Long.

THE CALLER OF THE BLACK, by Brian Lumley.

COLOSSUS, by Donald Wandrei.

DARK THINGS, edited by August Derleth.

THE CHRONICLES OF SOLAR PONS, by August
Derleth (A Mycroft & Moran book.)

H. P. LOVECRAFT: SOME NOTES TOWARD A
BIOGRAPHY, by August Derleth.

We hope also to work into schedule four collections of macabre poetry — by L. Sprague de Camp, Ambrose Bierce, Donald Fryer, and Lin Carter.

† † †

DR. KELLER'S LAST COLLECTION. In October Arkham House will publish a final collection of the stories of David H. Keller, *The Folsom Flint and Other Curious Tales*, most of them hitherto uncollected, though at least three are reprints. An introduction by Paul Spencer will precede the stories, which are *The Red Death*, *Unto Us a Child Is Born*, *The Golden Key*, *The White City*, *The Landslide*, *The Pent House*, *Air Lines*, *The Folsom Flint*, *Fingers in the Sky*, *Chasm of Monsters*, *The Twins*, *Sarah*, *The Question*, *Dust in the House* — and these classic, oft-reprinted tales: *The Thing in the Cellar*, *A Piece of Linoleum*, and *The Dead Woman*. The jacket is by Ronald Clyne. The book will be priced at \$5.00.

† † †

THIRTY YEARS OF ARKHAM HOUSE. Under this title we will publish in December a bibliography and history of Arkham House, with its associated imprints. In Decem-

ber Arkham House will begin its 31st year, incredible as that seems to its founder. The book will be similar in format to our 20th anniversary bibliography, but we will need to publish a somewhat larger edition to accommodate our growing clientele. The jacket is by Frank Utpatel, and the price is \$3.00.

† † †

A FINAL COLLECTION OF SMITH'S TALES. All the heretofore uncollected tales by the late Clark Ashton Smith will be published in a fat volume under the title *Other Dimensions*, as early in 1970 as circumstances will permit. The stories in this last collection are *Marooned in Andromeda*, *The Amazing Planet*, *An Adventure in Futurity*, *The Immeasurable Horror*, *The Invisible City*, *The Dimension of Chance*, *The Metamorphosis of Earth*, *Phoenix*, *The Necromantic Tale*, *The Venus of Azombeii*, *The Resurrection of the Rattlesnake*, *The Supernumerary Corpse*, *The Mandrakes*, *Thirteen Phantasms*, *An Offering to the Moon*, *Monsters in the Night*, *The Malay Krise*, *The Ghost of Mohammed Din*, *The Mahout*, *The Raja and the Tiger*, *Something New*, *The Justice of the Elephant*, *The Kiss of Zoraida*, *A Tale of Sir John Maundeville*, *The Ghoul*, *Told in the Desert*. Jacket art is by Ronald Clyne, and the price of the collection is \$6.50.

† † †

A TWIST OF FRAME

Continuously she hated, feared them, knew,
lying at night, their presence probing through
the house, insinuating under shingles,
thrusting pale fingers into joints and sills
or wrapping themselves fast in huge surcingle
about a dormer. She sensed the muted squalls
in soft Spencerian sliding
over the weathered siding.

Could she remember those who cried with glee
 finding the first winding, a pink filagree
 that nosed about a lattice, climbed a tier
 and teetered on an eave? That tentative
 intruder, how was it to make them fear
 for a shared house? Live, let generously live:
 by this their hearth subsisted
 before the frame was twisted.

No, there was never sound of driven nail
 suffering into wood. A dumb travail
 marked how each day arrived with its decline;
 a tissue added in the master groin
 tapered to massive column wrought of vine,
 and separate withes turned always to subjoin.
 Thick on thick year. Till late
 she lost both fear and hate.

One day the town looked sidewise when it passed,
 seeing a wooden shambles held hard, fast,
 by swelling tentacles. The townfolk talked:
 a moral sore, how two of them should stay,
 two sisters, while those whiplash fingers stalked,
 pushing the roof apart, the walls away.
 The talkers, did they care?
 What other talk was there?

She counseled with her self. One thought returned
 again, again, a garbled truth discerned
 in the scratching night. The Vines, what did they think?
 You had to respect their point of view —
 the way they writhed as if it made them shrink
 (wringing a pullet's neck made her flinch, too).
 Once with a life in throe
 you cannot quite let go.

—William D. Barney

UNDER THE EAVES

by Lin Carter

We loved the old house at first glance. A huge Victorian thing, all towers and gingerbread trim, with stained glass windows on the stair that shed pools of colored light, gules and emerald, claret and gold, through which you waded.

We were newly married then, Senthia and I, and we loved old things. Old books, old standards, old houses. We knew we could be happy here among these meandering halls and shadowy rooms whose emptiness was filled with cool afternoons and the scent of honeysuckle. And so we were at first, for this was before the bitterness and the silences, and long before I discovered the terrible letters.

My memory is fading. It comes and goes, dark periods and lucid intervals. I cannot remember when I first came to suspect the forgotten room existed. Surely it was early in our residence, before the quarrels, in the long quiet days when our love was as new and as strange to us as the great old house itself.

It began, I think, in my dreams. I seemed to half-remember that there was one room we had seen when we first explored the old house — one room that we had somehow forgotten and overlooked in all the confusion of newness. If you have ever lived in a very large house with many, many rooms, perhaps you can understand this. At the beginning you have to stop and think: to reorient yourself, to trace a mental map. The library is next-door to the big guest room we shall probably never use; yes, and the upstairs bedroom that could be a child's room . . . is it to the left or the right of Senthia's sewing room? It takes a piece of time to become familiar with new rooms, new places; to learn their colors, textures, odors and moods . . .

No — now I am certain the feeling began some time after that awful moment of confrontation, after that terrible hour of hatred laid naked and ugly, of words laid on my soul like whip-strokes from her contemptuous tongue — words that cut and tore and stung — some time after she went away from me it was, that I first began to dream of the lost room, the forgotten room, the room that memory displaced. It was in my dreams that I visited it again, remembering, remembering. The cramped, dusty little room up under the eaves, the afternoon light tarnished and dim through dust-clogged panes, all a clutter of old tables: hot, stuffy, the ceaseless buzzing of a fly trapped in the cobwebbed corners of the roof and gone mad . . . the dry, musty smell of old neglected things locked away, put out of mind . . .

Sometimes, half in jest and to relieve the dreamlike tedium of empty hours and days, I used to search for the lost room. There were so *many* rooms, you see, odd-angled, set on edge, no straight lines, corridors that curved and wandered in a lazy, oldfashioned style, never coming to an end — like thoughts in a mad brain, retracing the same paths forever. It was really quite possible to lay aside and overlook one room among so many we had never used, and now would never use. This was especially true after Sentha went from me and I was alone, all, all alone, in the great, empty, silent house. Alone except for dreams and memories and shadows, and the echoes of half-forgotten words . . .

Since we went apart from each other I have seldom had reason to visit the top floor. Those dusty, cramped, airless little rooms, stifling under the eaves, shadowy, drowned in murky green light that shines dim and faint through the leaves of the old oaks that stand close to the house as if to guard it from the intrusion of the day. We never used the top floor for anything when we were alone together — why then should I visit it now that I am alone?

It was the dream, the dream. It haunted me and kept returning through silent hours when I lay unsleeping, remembering the final quarrel, that afternoon when I found the letters. I could half-remember the thick taste of fury in my mouth, the sick vertigo of betrayal, as I had trudged slowly and heavily up the stairs, wading through crimson pools of light from the colored windows — the terrible letters in my hand like knives — up, up, step after slow step, to the top floor — and somewhere, in one room or another, Sentha was there, her pale hair caught up in a cloth against the dust, doing something with the boxes. *She was in the vanished room, the room I had forgotten.*

I lay stiff as a dead thing. The drowsy half-nap ended abruptly, as I realized where the room was. I lay motionless in a tight, drumming silence that ached with tension. My heart panted in my breast. My pulse thudded in my head. And it was then, breaking suddenly from half-dream into full wakefulness, that I held tight to the slippery memory that had always eluded me before. I knew where the lost room was.

I went up the creaking stairs swift and silent, before the memory should slip from me again — and *there* — *there* in that dark, neglected corner of the top floor hall — there, where three doors met — the door to the unused attic stair — the door to the empty hall closet — and *another* door, the door I had forgotten all this while!

At first it seemed locked or stuck. Then I was through it and stood within. Remembering, remembering. Afternoon light through dust-fogged panes. Clutter of old, peeling tables. The buzzing and the smell. The *smell!*

It came back with terrible, bitter clarity even before I saw the crumpled, twisted, withered, dry thing that lay pitifully still in the angle of the wall. I could almost hear the words, her scathing thrill words, the white look of awful scorn on her face, and taste the hatred rising in the back

of my throat like a terrible aching thirst, dry, hot, nauseating. And when I looked and saw the dry dead thing in the corner under the eaves, I remembered all in one bright scalding wave of intolerable memory. And I knew *why* this room, this one room of all the rooms, I had locked and sealed away from remembering. Of course. Of course!

This was the room in which she killed me.

† † †

NIGHTMARE THREE

I walked a once-familiar street
and saw the house where I was raised;
I understood access was mine
and so I went inside.
The rooms were there as I remembered;
I knew a childhood happiness again.
Glancing out, I saw the city as it was
a long half century ago.
But then I glimpsed an unexpected door
where I had not remembered one,
a small low door, in a room's corner.
I opened it and entered —
entered an alien room, huge and grey,
which led to other rooms and other worlds,
landscapes lost in time, strange dimensions
dark and undescribed —
I fled the house,
fled down fluid streets,
through dim dissolving courts,
till panic fear
at last awoke me!

—Joseph Payne Brennan

† † †

SHADOW ON THE WALL

The shadow on the wall
Grows larger, clearer.

On dark nights as I lie abed,
Reading and musing of the past,
Thinking of what the old man said —
"You are not wholly real, my boy.
Part of you came from 'way Out There", —
I call him wrong! I've lived and read
And found my body and my hair
Resembles that of other men.

Sometimes the eerie shadow shifts;
The light behind me casts a form
Most strange. It weaves and oddly lifts
And scares me. It melts and flows
From light purple to deep red wine.
I shudder as it slowly drifts
And bares the wall. What shapes entwine
And mold the restless figure there?

The shadow in my *mind*
Grows larger, clearer . . .

—Duane Rimel

† † †

OF WILLIAM HOPE HODGSON. In his introduction to the memorial volume of William Hope Hodgson's verse, *The Calling of the Sea*, A. St. John Adcock recalls the author of some of the most exceptional and imaginative weird novels of his time. "There was something curiously attractive in his breezy, forceful, eager personality," he writes; "his dark eyes were wonderfully alert and alive; he

was wonderfully and restlessly alive and alert in all his mind and body. He was emphatic and unrestrained in his talk, but would take the sting out of an extravagant denunciation of some inartistic popular author, or of some pestilent critic, and the egotism out of some headlong confession of his own belief in himself with the pleasantest boyish laugh that brushed it all aside as the mere spray and froth of a passing thought. His dark, handsome features were extraordinarily expressive; they betrayed his emotions as readily as his lips gave away whatever happened to rise in his mind. Always he had the courage of his opinions and no false modesty; it never seemed to occur to him to practise politic subterfuges; and it was this absolute candour and naturalness that compelled you to like him and before long strengthened your liking into a friendly affection." Mr. Adcock remembered that Hodgson "ranked as his highest achievement" his long novel, *The Night Land*, "and owned he was disappointed that it was not generally regarded as such. The story is told in quaint, archaic language; it is by turns grim, idyllic, and touched with supernatural horror. . . . It is a strikingly original piece of work, giving full scope to Hope Hodgson's sombre imaginative power and his peculiar flair for the weirdly horrible and the hauntingly mysterious." He says of Hodgson that "He aimed high, and, taking his art very seriously, had a frank, unaffected confidence in his powers which was partly the splendid arrogance of youth and partly the heritage of experience, for he had tested and proved them." William Hope Hodgson was killed in action in April, 1918, in France. Of Hodgson's work only the Arkham House collections, *Deep Waters*, and *Carnacki, the Ghost-Finder*, now remain in print.

† † †

LOST

And aye! I set to search the grey, lone plains
 For my love out in the gloaming —
 For my Maiden, whence sad strains
 Came o'er the waters moaning —
 Moaning, moaning, moaning —
 O'er the sea-hills wildly roaming.

And aye! I set to search the grey, grey sea,
 With my spirit-pulses ailing —
 Set out to search the mists for thee,
 That slept eternal, veiling —
 Veiling, veiling, veiling —
 Grey deeps whence came thy wailing.

And I swam through spume, grey with the touch
 of death,
 To a far, faint wall of singing,
 As one who sang with moaning breath,
 Kissed by sad surges, swinging —
 Swinging, swinging, swinging —
 The sea-bells weirdly ringing.

And I came upon her, clothed about with foam,
 And in her eyes the silence of the sea;
 And I made to bear her home;
 But her eyes looked not on me.
 All mystery, all mystery,
 Hung round about; and wild and free
 Rung out the sea-bells of the grey-grey sea.

—William Hope Hodgson

† † †

SHOON OF THE DEAD

Hush! as you pass,
 And hark!
 Three taps on the glass
 In the gloaming
 From something out in the dark —
 Roaming.

Hush! and hark
 To a step you hear pass —
 Someone is out in the dark.
 Hark to the death-wind go wailing,
 And the tap of a ghost on the glass.
 Hush! and hark!

Open the door,
 And listen!
 Only the wind's muffled roar,
 And the glisten
 Of tears round the moon.
 And, in fancy, the tread
 Of vanishing shoon —
 Out in the night with the Dead.

Hush! and hark
 To the sorrowful cry
 Of the wind in the dark.
 Hush and hark,
 Without murmur or sigh,
 To shoon that tread the lost aeons:
 To the sound that bids you to die.
 Hush! and hark!

—William Hope Hodgson

† † †

THE CRACK IN THE WALL

by Walter Jarvis

His wife, waiting on the front steps, had something unpleasant to tell him; Jasper Thornberry knew this even before he slid heavily out of the aging station-wagon. Roberta never met him at the door unless there were some grievance she had suffered with the whole day, and couldn't wait to share, not even until he got into the house.

"Jasper, I want you to go straight down to the basement and look at the crack in the wall."

"I'll do it as soon as I feed the plants," he muttered, avoiding her critical eyes.

In almost every case Jasper was a more than obedient husband; Roberta had once likened him to a well-trained dog that fetched beautifully, something which could not be said for her own toy-poodle, Ninette, Jasper's four-legged adversary in the household. But in one matter he was obdurate; every afternoon when he got home from work he would feed the Venus flytraps growing in an aquarium near the kitchen sink. Roberta had her lap-dog; Jasper his carnivorous plants.

"I discovered the crack this afternoon when Ninette and I went down to do the laundry," his wife said, following him into the house. "It's not very big, but it could be dangerous. Didn't I tell you four years ago it wasn't a good idea to build on the side of this hill? Didn't I?"

"Yes, you told me," he said, going to the refrigerator and removing a slice of bacon. Carefully he cut several slivers of meat from the strip and carefully dropped them into the open lobes of the plant.

"There's one for you, Hymen, one for you, Aphrodite, and a big piece for you, Eros," he cooed, smiling down into the aquarium. Not until the tiny jaws closed satisfyingly on

their food did he turn to face his wife.

"Jasper, I think your giving names to those things is abnormal. Why can't you raise roses, like everyone else on this block? If you'd spend more time on practical matters instead of those creatures, maybe this house wouldn't be so rundown. Well, are you going down to look at that crack or not?"

Wordlessly he descended the basement stairwell, leaving his wife in the kitchen, while Ninette trotted ahead of him, a miniature Cerberus leading the way.

Fumbling around in the dark until he found the cord to the single, dangling bulb, Jasper flooded the basement with a dull, leaden light, which glinted brightest in Ninette's shrewd, black-button eyes.

"Some time I'll have to get down here and clean this place up," he decided, looking desultorily around him. The basement was filled with forgotten odds and ends. Leaning against the stairwell was his golf bag, left untouched after a particularly violent drive had so strained his back that he had been forced to give up the game. His tooltable was gathering dust in one corner, a remnant of the halcyon days when he used to putter around down here in a cool, subterranean world his wife rarely invaded. A baby's play-pen folded against the wall — unwanted, never-used gift one of folded against the wall — an unwanted, never-used gift one of Roberta's sisters had given to them years ago.

Above it he noticed the crack, stretched fine as a strand of hair, and with the irregularity of a wolf's overbite, across the plastered smoothness of the wall. For several minutes Jasper stared at it. What did his wife expect him to do — wave his hand at it and make it go away?

With a shrug, he turned and plunged the basement into darkness, one foot rising in the same motion for the first step. But his shoe came squarely down on Ninette, who, having sniffed the basement and found nothing of interest,

had already begun her ascent. With a reproachful yowl, she scurried off into the darkness.

"Here, poochie," Jasper whispered, "Daddy didn't mean to step on you, and if you go crying up to Mama —" His words died on his lips; his jaw dropped open in the darkness like some deep sea groper's. For the crack was now glowing with a light of its own.

"Now that shouldn't be," he said aloud, staring hard at the faint luminescence, as if a close scrutiny would make it fade bashfully into the darkness.

He started to call out to his wife, then hesitated. He could well imagine that her reaction to this would be similar to his, only stronger. "Such things don't happen in this neighborhood, not to the people across the street, not to us!" It would be easier for Roberta to convince herself that Jasper had gone mad than to even momentarily consider the possibility that her discovery of the afternoon possessed a totally inexplicable property. Probably she would go so far as to have him committed. Jasper calculated rapidly — the mortgage on the house was paid; she would have their savings; his health insurance would cover a modest, if comfortable asylum — no, better say nothing about it.

Ninette, perhaps sensing the sudden emotion which had lathered his body with perspiration, dashed from her hiding-place and up the stairs; Jasper, scarcely willing to be left alone with something so manifestly out of the ordinary, quickly followed. His thoughts quivering with what he had seen, he joined his wife before the moaning television and clumsily attempted to place the light below within the compass of his reason. Then, after she had gone up to bed, he crept hurriedly down the basement stairs again for a second look.

The crack was still glowing with its own ghostly, cathode-like light. Suddenly it occurred to him to look inside to discover the source of the radiance.

He approached the wall warily and knelt down to eye-level. The fissure was now wider, and what he saw through it puckered his lips into a low, frightened whistle. As a child he had had a plastic view-master which, when held up to the light, illuminated some scenic wonder on the plastic slide inside. The effect he now achieved was much the same — a landscape visible through the constricting eyepiece of the fissure, an inviting sun-drenched pastoral of flame-red flowers and a clear, bubbling stream, a foreground to the distant ridge of purple mountains. Not only impossible, but almost too pretty.

Later he could not remember how long he had squatted like a boy at a peep-show before the crack, waiting for something to move, for the landscape to change in some way. When he finally rose to go upstairs, it was with the realization that if there were to be any transformation, it would not be in his presence.

The next morning, after a sleepless night, Jasper paused to gulp down a cup of coffee, no more, then went hastily down into the basement to look inside the crack. There was no light; no landscape met his eye, only tightly-packed soil. He breathed a sigh of relief, but he was vaguely disappointed.

"Jasper, what are you doing down there?" his wife called out from the top of the stairs.

"I just wanted to see if the crack had gotten any bigger," he answered.

"Well, has it?"

Coming up the stairs, he told her that the crack was almost five feet long and had widened at least an inch over night. Before she could begin her tirade about how they should never have built in this sub-division, Jasper left for work.

So filled were his thoughts that day with the crack and what he had seen on the other side of the wall, that he

bungled his accounting figures, sending on quotients that should have been products, the roots of numbers intended to be raised, and when he got home that night, the first thing he did, neglecting even to feed his Venus's fly-traps, was rush down to the basement to examine the fissure.

It was glowing again, more brightly than before. Perhaps that's only because it's bigger and letting in more light from the other side, he thought wildly. But there had been no visible change in the landscape; it was still peaceful, pastoral, timeless; though a new dimension had been added. Jasper could now smell the sweetness of the flowers, whose scent vaguely resembled those of the Venus's fly-traps upstairs, and his right cheek, pressed against the crack, tingled from the touch of a breeze wafting in from the other side.

His face transfigured with wonder, he went upstairs and into the living-room where his wife was watching television. "The crack's gotten bigger," he said.

Her face darkened. "It's going to bring down the value of the house and probably flood the basement in winter. You'll have to do something about it."

"I'll buy some plaster tomorrow," he mumbled, "and try to cover it up." Looking at his wife slouched in her chair, absently stroking the dog curled archly in her lap with more affection than she had shown him in years, Jasper wished there were a place on the other side of the wall for him, too.

The figures he had jumbled on the previous day were connected with an important account. As a result, he was called into the assistant manager's office next morning, an explanation was demanded of him, and, when none could be given, Jasper was curtly dismissed. He telephoned his wife to prepare her for his return home; as he had expected, she berated him even more severely than the assistant manager had.

"There'll be some changes made around here," she

ended ominously, and hung up.

Driving home on the freeway, dreading a resumption of her vitriol, he wished he would not have to face her again, that there was some place he could hide. When he pulled up into the driveway, she was not only waiting for him on the front porch, but actually stormed out to the car, Ninette yapping angrily at her heels, her own tongue trembling with vituperation.

"You've been sliding down hill for a long time," she cried, following him into the house. "Well, you aren't too old to turn over a new leaf, and I intend to see to it that you do. I suppose you didn't buy that plaster? Well, I *am* amazed. Now you're going straight down to the basement and wall up that crack."

"Not till I feed my plants," he said doggedly, remembering that they had gone unfed for two days, and refusing to be defeated on all fronts.

"That won't be necessary. They went down the garbage disposal an hour ago. If you'd spent less time with them and more time worrying about your job, you'd still be at work."

"You shouldn't have done that," he said reproachfully before descending the basement steps with the plaster.

Now she really will be impossible to live with, he decided, standing before the cracks. He knew that an old dog couldn't be taught new tricks; but though Roberta had done none too well with her French poodle, she was obviously determined to try to change him. Without a job, and feeling forever shackled to his wife, he stood longingly before the crack, hating to cut himself off with a coat of plaster from the paradise on the other side of the wall.

As if lifting the thought from his mind, the fissure suddenly crackled open wide enough for him to step through, flooding the basement with the light of day. "Why not?" Jasper asked himself. "It can't be any worse than it is here,

and it certainly looks a lot better. I'll have at least a couple of hours headstart on Roberta, and perhaps the crack will close behind me once I'm on the other side."

Ninette, who had followed him into the basement, was suddenly tempted by the appearance of a whole field of bright red flowers which, in the canine convolutions of her brain existed only to be uprooted, acted before Jasper could decide — with a shrill bark, she leapt through the wall.

As he watched, the purple mountains and flowery fields dissolved into grinding rock and gravel, and the crack snapped shut on the white poodle with the finality of a landslide.

Jasper stood shuddering before the smooth, unseamed wall, envisioning himself going through the living concrete-mixer that had just swallowed up Ninette. He had never suspected that the crack in the wall might be a trap — but if there were carnivorous plants, Nature must have room somewhere for man-eating walls, equipped with much more sophisticated lures than sweetly-scented flowers to attract their prey.

Without warning, the crack yawned open again, causing him to jump back. The picture-postcard fields and purple mountains were once again in place — but of Ninette there was nothing to be seen.

"So you're still hungry?" he whispered, addressing the crack in the wall. "Poor Ninette!" He shook his head, though he had never much liked the dog. "I almost wish it had been me — there's no possible way I can explain this to Roberta. This is going to crush her . . ."

Then he stopped, brightened, and began chuckling to himself.

He went upstairs to get his wife.

† † †

GHOSTS

There was a time when men saw ghosts —
 unstable, dim, and gray —
 Of people who had erstwhile lived
 and left this life for aye.
 To crumbling midnight houses
 and to stuffy seance rooms
 Came phantoms who, as men of flesh,
 had met with dismal dooms —
 Of prisoners who died forgotten,
 clanking spectral chains,
 Of misers who were loath to quit
 their useless earthly gains,
 Of queens who knelt beneath the ax,
 of killers and their prey,
 Of girls who died for love,
 and those who dared themselves to slay.

And nowadays we still see ghosts —
 unstable, dim, and gray —
 Of things that once were commonplace
 but now have passed away.
 To darkened movie halls,
 when ancient newsreel clips are shown,
 Come wraiths of czars and sultans,
 and the Kaiser on his throne,
 Of gentlemen in silken hats
 and striped morning pants,
 Of hansom cabs and mounted soldiers
 armed with sword and lance,
 Of battleships and biplanes.
 Well, how ling till we today
 And our creations make
 as antiquated ghosts as they?

—L. Sprague de Camp

A FRAGMENT FROM THE ATLANTEAN

The flame-red sun was made a paling moon by mist
 As by the Ocean Sea we stood and mused at dawn
 And watched the ghostly waves uproll from out the east:
 Fashioned of mist, fantastical creatures came to fawn
 About our feet, there in that half-light of the dawn,
 Bearing us gifts of shadowy crowns and shadowy gems:
 Anon tall kings and queens with faces proud and wan,
 With strange lights pouring from their crystal diadems,
 Filed slowly by, dressed in great purple robes
 with white-gold hems:

Tridents upon their crowns and in their hands they bore —
 Of orichalch the teeth, of orichalch the stems —
 While winds blew fanfares for them as they paced the
 shore:

More and more thickly swarmed the mist billowing
 out of the east,
 And more fantastic grew the shapes created by the mist . . .

—Donald S. Fryer

† † †

THE ONLOOKER

I saw the peril of the marsh
 Walk flitting on the stagnant pool,
 And heard it scream with voice more harsh
 Than tones of goblin, fiend, or ghoul;
 It did not see me where I stood,
 But searched with white and spectral eyes
 For youthful prey that hugged the wood,
 Asworn with terror of the cries.

The figure turned to meet my gaze;
 A woman's cold, translucent form
 Stood wrapped in early dawning rays,
 While on its mouth the blood was warm.
 Then in the east the sky turned red,
 The phantom sought the grave it knew;
 I clutched the stake with hand of lead,
 And from my box the hammer drew.

—Wade Wellman
 † † †

A DARKER SHADOW OVER INNSMOUTH by James Wade

As I boarded the wheezing, rattling bus bound for Innsmouth there at the station next to a bustling supermarket in Newburyport, I could not suppress a shudder at the thought that now, at last, I was bound for that ancient, decadent, shadow-blighted Massachusetts seaport of which so many repellent legends are whispered. I had read all the Lovecraft stories, of course, and those of his numerous successors, which chronicle how rapacious voyagers of the past century brought horror and calamity upon the town through their impious trafficking with blasphemous humanoid sea-dwellers; creatures who fetched them treasure from weed-grown, Cyclopean ocean-bottom cities, but who in turn insisted upon not only the townsmen's worship of frightful alien deities like Dagon and Great Cthulhu, but even upon the unholy mating of human and amphibian, producing a hideous hybrid strain of half-reptilian, fishlike abnormalities who inhabited the town until they "changed" sufficiently to take up an immortal existence at the bottom of the sea.

Of course, I knew too that the town had been hard hit

by federal raids over forty years ago, according to Lovecraft's informants; but I realized

"That is not dead which can eternal lie,

And with strange aeons, even death may die,"

in the words of a fortune-cookie verse I once nearly choked on — a cookie served me, strangely enough, at an Arabian restaurant in Osaka.

Now I was at last on my way to see for myself these eldritch, unholy entities and enclaves; and to join in the bestial rites therewith associated; that is, if my credentials were all in order. (My Order of Dagon card was signed by August Derleth, but a report had reached me that Colin Wilson had taken over the high priesthood in a daring palace coup.)

As we approached ill-rumored Innsmouth along the desolate Rowley Road, I knew I would not be disappointed; here were the rotting, fishy-smelling wharves; the bearpained ancient houses; the massive, obscurely terrifying warehouses, holding impassively the secrets of outer arcana, the crumbling, desecrated churches devoted to what hideous ceremonies the sane mind could only shudder to imagine.

As I alighted from the bus at Town Square in front of the sinister and horror-infested fabric of the Gilman House hotel, with its tattered Diners' Club sticker, the only person in sight was a slatternly girl with bulging, unwinking eyes and rough, crinkly skin around the sides of her neck. I struck up an acquaintance with this unprepossessing creature — whose name, I learned, was Nella Kodaz — on the pretext of being a stranger in need of guidance, and we strolled down to a deserted wharf where the sibilant and immemorial sea came sliding and hissing out of the mist.

"Tell me, Nella," I queried, "I know there is more in Innsmouth than meets the eye. How can I arrange to see the forbidden things secreted in those dilapidated ware-

houses and hidden away in the ancient boarded-up dwellings here?"

"Better get a C.I.A. clearance first," she replied.

"C. I. A.? Don't you mean Esoteric Order of Dagon?"

"That Dagon jazz is all washed up. After the Navy raids here in 1928, they say, the government kept a close eye on any funny business. During World War II there was a commando school here, and since then it's been used mostly as a hush-hush Defense Department experimental and training station. That's why everything's under cover and visitors aren't welcome. I thought you knew, from the way you talked."

I was flabbergasted. "But what about the monstrous batrachian sea-creatures out beyond Devil Reef? The blasphemous fish-frogs that always dominated Innsmouth and exacted their unholy tribute?"

"Well, every few weeks the Navy people dump a few crates of shark-repellent into the deep water off the reef. If there's any boogie-men around, that seems to hold them."

"You must excuse me, Nella — but it seems to me you yourself exemplify what is referred to as 'the Innsmouth look', those peculiarities of personal appearance shown by people descended from human matings with the Deep Ones — people who will some day dive down to live forever in the sea-bottom citadel of Y'ha-nthlei."

"Wrong again. I got an overdose of radiation, just a slight one, when I was working as a lab tech at the atomic reactor where they're making defoliants. The insurance paid through the nose, and I'm due for some free plastic surgery in a few months."

"But what about those older inhabitants of Innsmouth who did have an amphibian strain in their ancestry?"

"The ones who are left come under Medicare now. Mostly their relatives committed them years ago, and

they're in protective custody at a big aquarium down near Marineland. It's sort of like Disneyland — people pay to see the Creatures from the Black Lagoon, only they think it's a fake."

"Then what's hidden in all those huddled, leering old houses and sealed, sagging warehouses?"

"Oh, all sorts of things — anti-personnel bombs, defoliant, infiltration training setups, secret courses on Karate and winning the hearts and minds of the people. Professors from Miskatonic University come out twice a week to teach counter-insurgency tactics."

"Not the famous Miskatonic University!"

"Yes, in Arkham — where the new napalm plant is going up. Miskatonic U. got a big government contract, so they tore down their library, threw out all those moldy old books on sorcery, and built the biggest Pacification and Incineration Training Center in the country."

Suddenly, with a numbing shock, I saw a hideous form emerging from the foaming breakers — a dark, glistening shape, its skin a squamous green — vaguely humanoid in outline, but surmounted by a flat, bestial head with bulging, glassy eyes.

"Run for your life!" I shouted. "They've seen us! The Deep Ones! The monstrous, frog-like minions of . . ."

"Calm down," Nella interrupted in a bored tone. "It's a frog-man, all right — just part of the underwater demolition school for Special Forces. Why, it's Elvis Whateley from Dunwich Acres. Hi, there! Dry off and let's all go downtown and slug back a few beers."

So we did.

Now I have been in Innsmouth over six weeks. More and more I admire the quaint but swinging old town; more and more I enjoy my job packing defoliant from the atomic reactor; more and more I love my new wife, Nella Kadoz, with her soulful staring eyes and intriguing wattled neck.

And in just eight months, a little stranger will join us!

I'm taking a night course in Karate at Miskatonic, and angling for a job at the napalm factory when it's finished. I may even quit the Order of Dagon and join the Green Berets.

Yes, I'm a happy, fulfilled person. I came to Innsmouth seeking the cosmically evil — looking for sin on a supernatural scale, for horrors beyond the imagination of mere mortal man.

And I've found them. Lovecraft and the Great Old Ones don't hold a candle. Give me the crusade to protect peace and freedom any day.

† † †

CARCOSA

I sense, on crystal winter evenings
When constellations gleam through black-
branched trees,
A night-dark star no earthly gazer sees
To which some dread malevolently clings.
No star-chart shows it — no — yet slumber brings
Its vision from the clustered Hyades —
Black waters over which a leaden breeze
Wafts the sad song that dead Cassilda sings.

No darker vision greets the sleeper than
That lake, from which the coiling cloud-waves pour
To break upon the long basaltic shore
Beneath the rays of red Aldebaran —
The lake whence dreamers flee in nameless dread
As Hastur rises from his slimy bed.

—Richard L. Tierney

† † †

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES. Under the title of *H. P. Lovecraft II*, the rock group using the name of H. P. Lovecraft has created another interesting album — Philips 600-279 by number. Listeners who heard the first album generally found it good; this second is even better. Among the titles of the individual numbers are *At the Mountains of Madness* and *Keeper of the Keys*. It is no coincidence that interest in Lovecraft's *At the Mountains of Madness and Other Novels* has been markedly increased since the release of the album, and so to some extent have sales of August Derleth's *The Trail of Cthulhu*, one of the chapters of which is *The Keeper of the Keys*. The H. P. Lovecraft group manages to achieve some eerie effects and a general air of mysticism permeates their music, all within the limitations of the chosen form.

Arkham House books are enjoying an increasing vogue on the Continent. In the Netherlands the house of Bruna & Zoon has embarked on publication of a series of books from Arkham House, largely because of the interest manifested by a devoted aficionado. A. C. Prins, of Delft. Already published are collections by H. Russell Wakefield, H. P. Lovecraft, August Derleth, and two anthologies of Arkham House stories — *Het Monster in de Lift* and *De Bewoner van het Meer*. Coming are collections by Robert E. Howard and H. P. Lovecraft, as well as two more Arkham House horror story anthologies. . . . Meanwhile, in France the April issue of *L'Herne* was completely devoted to H. P. Lovecraft, Editions Planete have brought out W. H. Hodgson's *Deep Waters*, another publisher will soon release H. P. Lovecraft's *Supernatural Horror in Literature*, and an entire series of Arkham House translations is being planned. . . . In England Lovecraft's *The Case of Charles Dexter Ward* has appeared in a Panther paperback and the Lovecraft/Derleth *The Lurker at the Threshold* is like to follow soon. . . . An Italian publish-

er is soon to bring out in one volume August Derleth's "*In Re: Sherlock Holmes*" — *The Adventures of Solar Pons* and *The Memoirs of Solar Pons*. . . . Finally, a German publisher is planning to issue over the next decade a series of books drawn from the Arkham House list.

The first issue of *Supernatural*, a handsome, lavishly-illustrated magazine, has appeared in England, edited by Tim Stout, published at 25 Headswell Crescent, Redhill, Bournemouth, at \$.90 the copy. Presumably the second issue has also appeared by this time, but it has not yet come to hand here. Emphasis in the first issue is on horror in films, with many reproductions, but there are also — an interview with Dennis Wheatley by Editor Stout, a thumbnail listing of horror performers by J. Ramsey Campbell, and Tim Stout's *Shadows out of Time*, an appreciative review of the last Lovecraft collection published in England.

The April issue of *The Pontine Dossier*, published by Luther Norris in Los Angeles (Volume 2, Number 2) has come to hand. It features delightful contributions by Robert L. Fish, Philip Jose Farmer, Alvin F. Germeshausen (on Martin Hewitt), and Charles R. L. Power (on *The Old Doctor of Limehouse*), with an illustration of Dr. Fu Manchu by Frank Utpatel. Luther Norris has just published a new Sherlockian item — *A Compendium of Canonical Weaponry*, compiled by Bruce Dettman and Michael Bedford (\$3.00 the copy, directly from Norris at 3844 Watsuka Avenue, Culver City, California, 90230), in an edition limited to 300 copies. It is a handsome little book, with an introduction by Dean Dickensheet, a final word by John Bennett Shaw, and lively, delightful illustrations by Tom Walker. Sherlockians of all kinds will want to add this publication to their collections. Norris is now contemplating publication of a little group of Sax Rohmer stories if mutually satisfactory arrangements can be made. It may do for Rohmerites as an opener in a new series of Rohmer items.

Dean Dickensheet calls the new *Compendium* "a fascinating volume and . . . a valuable reference work." And, while we are quoting — Robert Lowndes, writing in *Startling Mystery Stories* (as editor, and by way of mention an old-time Lovecraft correspondent), said of *The Pontine Dossier*, "it is frankly a journal for an elite, but an open elite."

Solar Pons enthusiasts will be interested in knowing that the Praed Street Irregulars, headed by Luther Norris, now numbers over 600 members — that scion societies have been begun in Saigon (The Old Soldiers of Praed Street — about which a paragraph or two appeared in *The Overseas Weekly*, authored by Lt. Col. Theodore Schulz, an old-time Sherlockian and founder of the Old Soldiers), and in London (The Solar Pons Society of London), headed by Roger Johnson (the London Particular), and that the most recently completed Pontine tale, number seven for the *Chronicles*, is *The Adventure of the Benin Bronze*.

Lovecraft's *The Dunwich Horror* has at last gone into film production. We have no high hopes of seeing a genuine Lovecraftian tale. This is the lively way Joyce Haber, Hollywood columnist, hails the picture under the heading of "Sandra Dee Will Kick the Image in Her Next Picture" — "Whatever happened to Sandra Dee? She'll return to the screen and scene after three years' absence in a little American International horror film that should make *Rosemary's Baby* seem like an old, old late show starring Sandra Dee. Called *Dunwich*, it's what Sandra calls 'an adult film,' the kind she says she'll insist on making hereafter. It's some hereafter. 'I get hypnotized by this evil man and all sorts of things happen,' says Sandra. Indeed they do. In one dream sequence, Sandra walks into a room where an orgy is taking place, and she's supposed to participate. In 'the nude scene' (as they're called these days), Sandra loses her virtue (are you ready?) during a black mass on a hilltop in an electrical storm. That's kicking the Universal image in a big way." That's kicking the Lovecraft image in an even bigger way!

What we'd like to see is Wilbur Whateley and some of his friends pay a call to the set. "Nude scene" — Great Cthulhu!

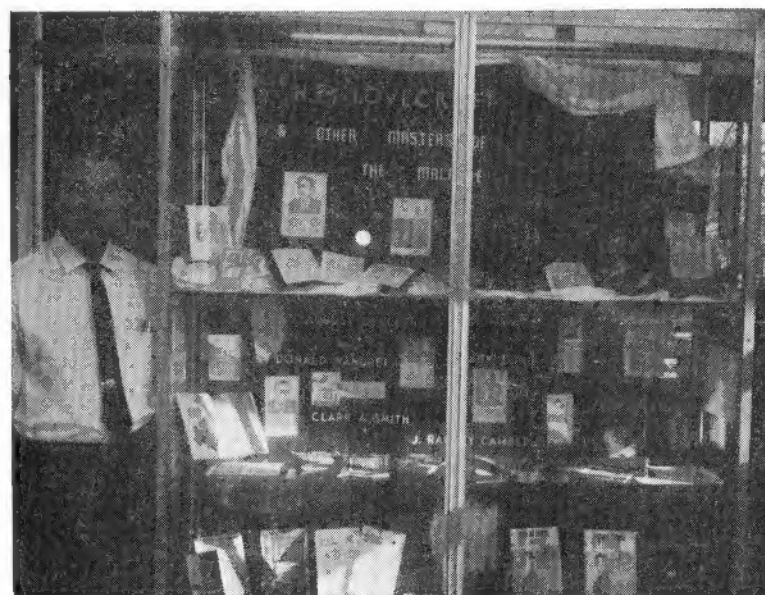
F. Lee Baldwin, of Box 1049, Lewiston, Idaho 83501, offers for sale the following tearsheets of stories by Lovecraft: *Beyond the Wall of Sleep*, *He, The Horror at Red Hook*, *The Dreams in the Witch-House*, *The Whisperer in Darkness*, *The Rats in the Walls*, *The Festival*, and *The Hound*. Each one is signed by Lovecraft — and Lovecraft signatures on his work are scarcer than those of any other twentieth century author! Mr. Baldwin will entertain bids at his address. Bear in mind, when bidding, that a postcard signature sells for \$10 and up!

The Mirage Press, 5111 Liberty Heights Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland 21207, reprints W. Paul Cook's *Portrait of Lovecraft* from our volume, *Beyond the Wall of Sleep*, with an introduction by Jack Chalker and a cover by Frank D. McSherry, Jr. The price is \$2.50. Mirage Press also offers L. Sprague de Camp's *The Conan Reader* (\$4.00) and a quartet of stories by Robert Bloch, *Dragons and Nightmares* (\$4.00). . . . Several of our readers have requested information about The Arthur Machen Society. Address requests to: Mr. Robert L. Mowery, Thomas Library, Wittenberg University, Springfield, Ohio 45501.

Now out of print at Arkham House are *The Feasting Dead*, by John Metcalfe; *This Mortal Coil*, by Cynthia Asquith; *Nightmare Need*, by Joseph Payne Brennan; and *The Throne of Saturn*, by S. Fowler Wright. Soon to go out of print are *Something Breathing*, by Stanley McNail; *The Return of Solar Pons*, by August Derleth; *The Abominations of Yondo*, by Clark Ashton Smith; and *The Clock Strikes Twelve*, by H. Russell Wakefield. Also running low in stock are Joseph Payne Brennan's *Nine Horrors and a Dream*, August Derleth's *The Reminiscences of Solar Pons*, and Clark Ashton Smith's *Poems in Prose*.

H. P. Lovecraft is becoming increasingly respectable

in academic circles as well as in the nation's libraries. In the past year at least a score of academic papers have dealt with Lovecraft, and last April the West Oak Lane Branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia sponsored an exhibit of Lovecraft's work, as well as that of other authors in the domain of the macabre. The exhibit was prepared by Henry E. Greene Jr., shown in the accompanying photograph by Eugene Griffin standing next to his work, which was the result of the collective interest of Miss Ruth Ann Robinson, Alex Weinborn, and William Breedlove. The exhibit was maintained from March 20 through April in a case at the front entrance of the library.



WHAT IT IS

I have no clear idea what it is,
 that being part of it, but sometimes
 it comes into the room as if looking,
 a little desperate, but indifferent,
 anxious, but not ever for you and not
 of course ever staying any longer
 than to say, "I've lost someone,"
 then leaving, through a watery silhouette,
 a hole in the room's natural light,
 as though, by going, it had torn itself
 off the skin of your eyeball, opening
 a way into further light, revealing,
 like the cleaned corner of an old painting,
 this room, for the first time, as it is.

—Roger Mitchell

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Arkham Collector subscribers who renewed a year ago for but one year will please note that it is now time to renew for issues 6 and 7, which will be published, circumstances permitting, in December and June, dated Winter 1970 and Summer 1970. We must again ask our subscribers not to write in advance of those two months asking where the coming issue is; we cannot answer such letters, for the publication date is well established, and subscribers who inquire in late April to ask "Where is my Summer issue?" really don't deserve a reply.